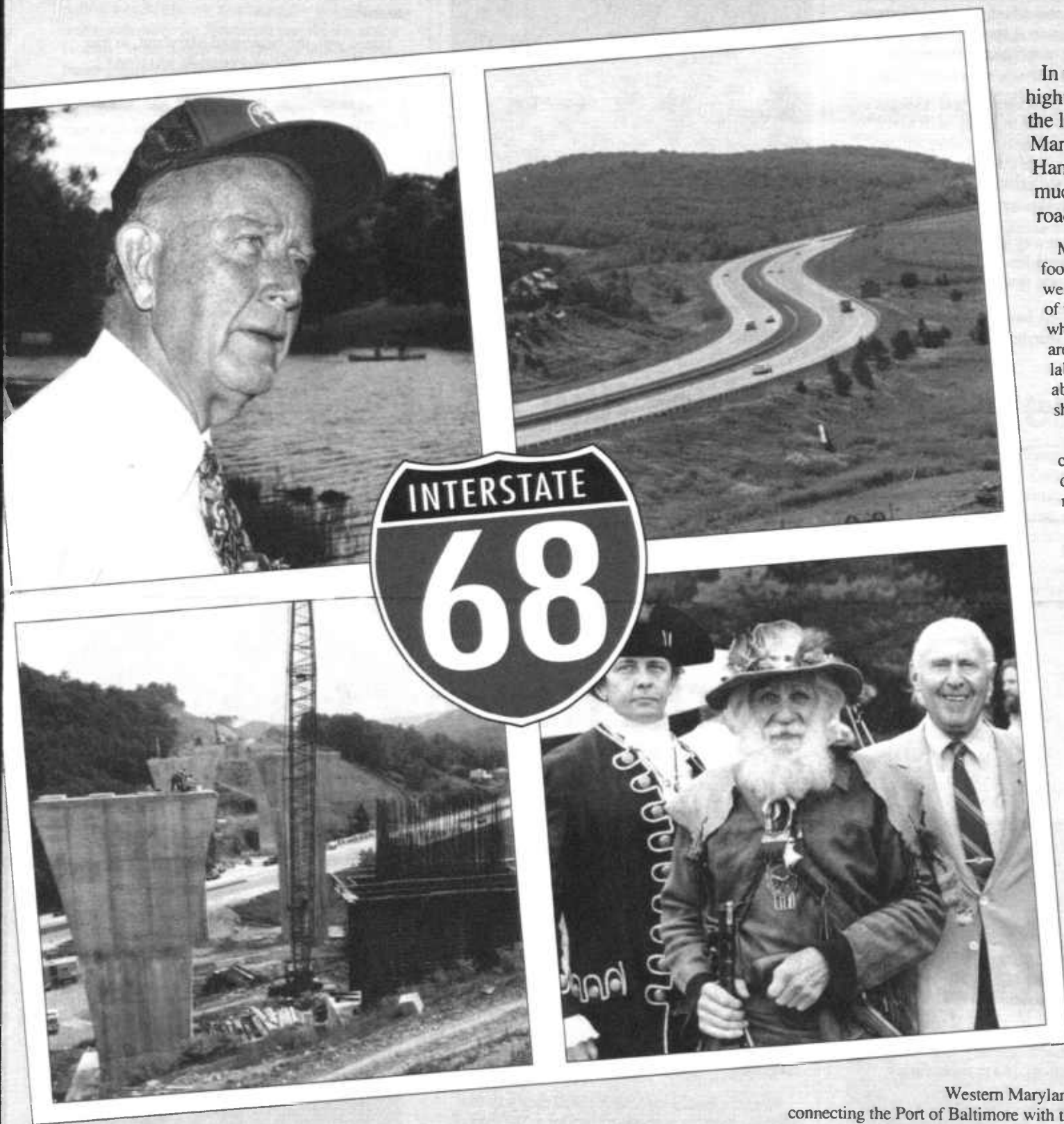


# BUILDING THE NATIONAL FREEWAY



*Clockwise, from top left: Gov. William Donald Schaefer, who strongly supported the completion of the National Freeway, visits Western Maryland; I-68 near Grantsville; State Comptroller Louis Goldstein (right) and members of Cumberland Bicentennial Honor Guard at groundbreaking for last 19 miles of freeway, May, 1987; constructing a high-level span of freeway near Cumberland, July, 1989.*

In the 1950s, when new interstate highways were beginning to reshape the landscape and lifestyles of much of Maryland and the nation, U.S. 40 from Hancock to Keyser's Ridge was not much more than a winding country road.

Most of the roadway consisted of two 12-foot lanes, one eastbound and one westbound, with 10-foot shoulders. On some of the mountains there were truck pull lanes, which in many cases were simply wide areas to allow cars to pass trucks slowly laboring up the steep grades. The road abounded in picturesque but dangerously sharp curves.

Two segments east of Cumberland, considered the toughest and most forbidding sections of U.S. 40 in the state, were relocated and dualized in the late 1950s.

The first segment, over Martin Mountain, was completed in 1957. The second, completed a year later over Polish Mountain, contained the deepest cuts and largest fills yet engineered in Maryland. But there was no dualization west of Cumberland, and 90 percent of the roadway remained unimproved — a scenic but formidable challenge to the average motorist and an effective deterrent to economic development in Western Maryland.

In 1965 the federal government focussed on the economic potential of the Appalachian region, with the passage by Congress of the Appalachian Regional Development Act. An essential part of the program was the Appalachian Development Highway System, a 3,000-mile, major highway network intended to foster economic development in Appalachia.

Maryland's key segment of the highway network, to be called the National Freeway, was meant not only to boost the economy of

Western Maryland, but to be part of an interstate network connecting the Port of Baltimore with the Ohio River Valley and the Midwest.

It would generally follow the route of U.S. 40 west of Cumberland, the old National Road; but it would also include upgrading or new construction generally following U.S. 40 east of Cumberland to Hancock, where it would connect with Interstate 70.

► BUILDING, page 5

**THE CREATION OF A NEW  
INTERSTATE LINK IN  
WESTERN MARYLAND IS A  
TRANSPORTATION MILESTONE**

# I-68 WILL BLAZE PATH TO PROGRESS



**The National Freeway will promote commerce and tourism in Western Maryland.**

**William Donald Schaefer, Governor  
State of Maryland**

The completion of the National Freeway in Maryland is a major accomplishment of which we can all be proud.

It was conceived at a federal level, as part of the 3,000-mile Appalachian Development Highway System, to promote economic and social development in Appalachia.

But it took two-and-a-half decades of perseverance and dedication at the state and local level to make the vision of a National Freeway a reality.

Because of that perseverance and dedication, we will have an 82-mile highway built to the highest interstate standards — a safe, efficient road that will encourage the influx of new industries, help retain existing businesses, and promote tourism in Western Maryland.

The National Freeway is one more link in Maryland's transportation system that makes it the best transportation system in the nation.

But we cannot sink into complacency. Over the past 20 years, Maryland has changed

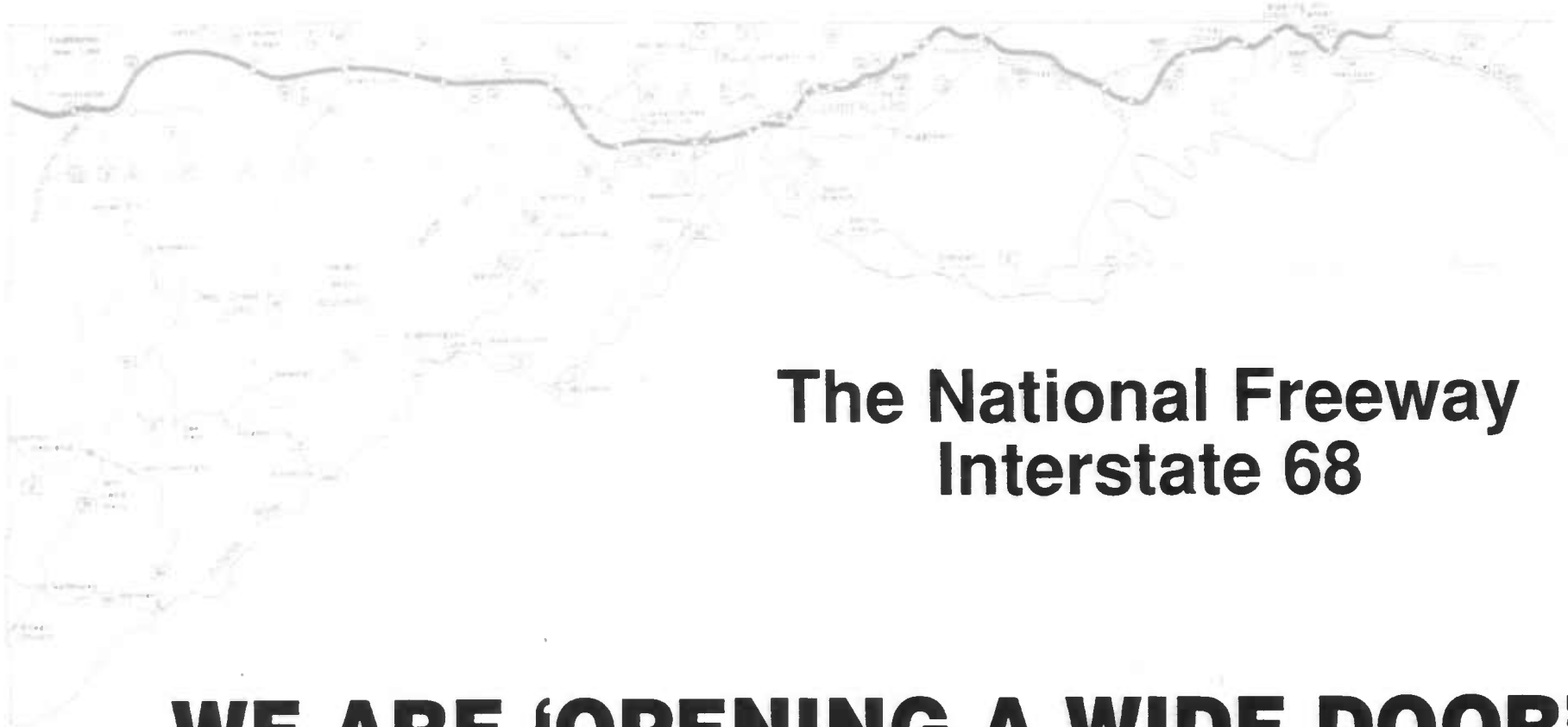


WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER

dramatically, and it will continue to change dramatically in the next 20 years. Our population is increasing, our employment and residential concentrations are shifting, and our commuter patterns and lifestyles are altering drastically.

Our transportation network, the lifeline of our state, must keep pace with these changing and growing needs. We must not only maintain our present system; we must also move forward and improve upon it. We cannot afford to do otherwise.

I need you, the citizens of Maryland, to join with me to preserve and upgrade Maryland's outstanding transportation system, which is so well exemplified by its newest addition, the National Freeway.



## The National Freeway Interstate 68

# WE ARE 'OPENING A WIDE DOOR'

**O. James Lighthizer, Secretary  
Maryland Department of Transportation**

George Washington foresaw the need for a road from the East Coast to the West as he charted a course for our new nation. He believed a trans-Appalachian land link was essential for moving crops and goods to the marketplace from the new frontier.

Writing in his diary of September, 1784, Washington called for the nation to "open a wide door, and make a smooth way for the Produce of the Country to pass to our markets."

Early in the 19th Century the young federal government responded to Washington's call, constructing the famed National Road, which became "The Gateway to the West."

Today, with the completion of the National Freeway, which follows the same general route, we are "opening a wide door" befitting the economic and transportation needs of Western

Maryland and the state in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Now we have a safe, high-speed roadway that will complete the interstate corridor to the Port of Baltimore, and will stimulate economic development and tourism in Western Maryland. We have a roadway that will link the mid-Atlantic region with the central Appalachian region and the major industrial centers in the Ohio River Valley and the Midwest.

Building the road has not been easy. It has taken 26 years of hard work by thousands of dedicated people struggling against formidable obstacles.

The Maryland Department of Transportation's dedication to the completion of this magnificent project is an outstanding example of our strong commitment to fulfilling the transportation needs of the citizens of Maryland and to support economic development throughout the state.



O. JAMES LIGHTHIZER



# MANY INVOLVED IN COMPLETING NATIONAL FREEWAY'S FINAL LINK

## Hal Kassoff, Administrator State Highway Administration

It's a genuine thrill to have been part of the completion of the last link of the National Freeway — from planning to construction.

The creation of a new interstate link along the nation's most historic road corridor is a transportation milestone for Maryland and for the entire country. What began with George Washington blazing a trail through the wilderness and the construction of the nation's first "National Road" will culminate in a modern highway that will be part of an interstate network designed to foster development and progress in Western Maryland and all of the Appalachian region.

The completion of the National Freeway (I-68) is a culmination of a long and difficult process — to find the funds, to resolve the debate on location, and to complete the project on schedule and within budget.

There are a multitude of people to thank — the



HAL KASSOFF

people and elected officials of Western Maryland, whose persistence in support of this project was legendary; Governor William Donald

Schaefer, who as mayor agreed to a financial plan that involved Baltimore City federal funding entitlements; former Secretary of Transportation Bill Hellmann, whose leadership was instrumental in resolving the location debate and in putting the funding package together; former Secretary of Transportation Richard Trainor, who gave top priority to completing the project; Secretary of Transportation Lighthizer, whose involvement with the "Western Maryland, More Than You Can Imagine" promotion was triggered by the freeway's completion; the many engineering consultants, contractors and suppliers who worked on the design and construction; and the men and women of SHA who have worked tirelessly on every aspect of this once-in-a-lifetime project.

It is with pride and joy that we present to the citizens of Maryland, and to the nation, a completed National Freeway.



The completion of the National Freeway was a culmination of a long and difficult process.



CASPER R. TAYLOR JR.

## I-68 will revitalize Western MD

### Casper R. Taylor Jr. Maryland House of Delegates

The opening of the National Freeway — Interstate 68 — marks a pivotal turning point in the history of Western Maryland.

Historically, transportation created Western Maryland's community and economy, beginning with the construction of the original National Road, and continuing with the C&O Canal and the B&O Railroad.

Governor Schaefer, through his leadership in the funding of the freeway, has caused a rebirth in our community and economy.

With the completion of this modern interstate,

Western Maryland and Central Maryland will be brought closer together — Cumberland will be a mere two hours from Baltimore! And the physical attractiveness of the highway, as it blends into the mountains and valleys, is a tourism boost in itself.

The commerce and social interaction generated by the National Freeway will revitalize Western Maryland.

## Thanks for the memories

There is no way we could thank by name every one of the thousands of people within the State Highway Administration who helped make the National Freeway a reality, and for that we apologize.

Nevertheless, with heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped in any way to complete this magnificent project, we acknowledge the contributions of:

**PLANNING:** Neil Pedersen • Frank Koller • Louis Ege Jr. • Robert Houst • John Harris • Robert Snyder • Cynthia Simpson • James Hawthorne • Dennis Yoder.

**HIGHWAY DEVELOPMENT:** Robert Douglass • Frederick Eisen • Gerald Jannetti • Dennis German • Ellis Turner • William Branch.

**RIGHT OF WAY:** Matthew Murray • Raymond Flesher • Dorin Armentrout • Harry Bowman • Edison Beachy • Robert Moore • Roxanne Harden • Terrance Ellsworth • Patricia Boone • Sandra Getson • Floyd Flesher • John Joyce • David Kelleher • Daniel McMullen Jr. • Richard Shindell • Tom Summers • Arthur Potts • George Phebus • Frank Deavers.

**MATERIALS AND RESEARCH:** Haleem Tahir • Ronald Rott • Samuel Miller Jr. • David Martin • Woody Wood • Matthew Kalb • William Greene • Larry Michael • Robert Shoemaker • Frank Bishop • John Bittinger.

**CONSTRUCTION:** Wallace Beaulieu • John Bushby • George Small • William Jewell • L.D. Metz • Joseph Dorsey • John Knepp • John Kroll • Wayne Clark • Vernon Shriver • Paul Bender • Maple Golden • Wayne Bittinger • David Golden • William Park • Edward Miller • John Glass • John True • Ray Souders • Rance Ritchie • Wayne Crowe • Robert McCarty • Randall Wiley • George Rose • Marlin Whitfield • Roger Brown • Mahlon Yost • Paul Sines • William Sines • Darrell Martin • Homer Hoover • George Holler • Phil Sonner • John Knight • Charles Hout • Hubert Custer • Morris Gaver • John Eagan • Paul Catherman • Dale Glass • James Walker • Joseph Wood • Thomas James • George Geary • James Blizzard • Joseph Footen • George Rice • Bernard Morrissey • Ralph Tewell.

**BRIDGE:** Earle Freedman • James Gatley • John Logan Sr. • Ralph Manna • William Malone Jr. • Charles Wroten • Steven Sharar • Andrej Kosicki • Glenn Vaughan • John



Administrator Hal Kassoff (right) presents a plaque to then-Project Engineer Robert Douglass for his efforts in expediting the start of construction of the last leg of the National Freeway.

Steimetz • John Ney • Ken McDonald • Keith Duerling • James Miller • Andrew Chin • Warren Barrett • Alan Forish • Joseph Barnickel • Phil Wei.

# FREEWAY FOLLOWS OLD NATIONAL ROAD

The National Freeway is steeped in the history of America. When America moved west, it did so on the Old National Road, the National Freeway's predecessor and namesake.

The Old National Road, which is the route of U.S. 40 today, was the first and only interstate highway built by the federal government. This great super highway of the Nineteenth Century started at Cumberland and ran west across the mountains, the Ohio River, the plains and almost reached St. Louis, Missouri.

It was of prime importance not only in the settling of the West, but in the development of Baltimore, because most of the traffic flowing eastward was headed to the markets and port of that city.

At its height the road carried the



**The Old National Road, the National Freeway's namesake, played a major role in our nation's history.**

heaviest traffic ever handled up to that time by an American thoroughfare. Four- and six-horse wagons ran so close together that the lead horses were said to have their noses in the spare feed baskets hanging from behind the wagons ahead.

The route of this historic road followed an old Indian trail, which in turn followed a well-established buffalo trace.

The first actual construction of the road west of Cumberland may be credited to the man who was to become the Father of his Country. George Washington, at the age of 22, was sent from Virginia in 1754 with a detachment of troops to drive the French from their American holdings at Ft. Duquesne (the site of present-day Pittsburgh). Because the road was



*A Conestoga wagon drawn by six horses passes a stagecoach at Wills Creek in Cumberland.*

not wide enough for his wagons of ammunition and stores, he sent 60 men ahead to widen the trail to 6 feet.

A year later, Washington's 6-foot roadway across the mountains was widened to 12 feet by General Braddock's troops as they marched westward to meet defeat at the hands of the French and Indians.

In 1806 Congress formally authorized a road to be built from Cumberland to the state of Ohio, to be funded by land sales in the new state.

On March 29, 1806, President Thomas Jefferson signed a bill appropriating \$30,000 for a preliminary survey from Cumberland, through the Cumberland Narrows and across the mountains to the Ohio River at Wheeling.

The first contract was let in 1811, and the road was opened to Wheeling by 1818.

Although the roads east of Cumberland were far from complete by that time, U.S. mail coaches immediately began service between Washington and Wheeling. They were followed over the mountains by a continuous stream of traffic that increased year by year. Forging westward, the road reached Columbus, Ohio, in 1833 and the Indiana state line five years later.

In 1838 Congress made its last appropriation for the National Road. By that time it had been "grubbed, graded and bridged" across the entire state of Indiana, and in Illinois the right of way had been established as far as Vandalia. This left only a "hop, skip and a jump" to complete the road to St. Louis, Missouri, the western terminus of the National Road.

The federal government spent about \$1.7 million on the section between Cumberland and Wheeling, an average cost for the 132 miles of about \$13,000 a mile, including extensive rebuilding in the 1830s. This was considered by many to be an exorbitant price.

The road was built according to

the best standards then known to American engineers. It was hailed as the finest in the United States, and its heavy stone foundation was compared to that of the Appian Way.

Nevertheless, by the time Congress transferred ownership of the road in 1832 to the states through which it passed, it was badly in need of repair. Maryland and Pennsylvania accepted the road only on the condition that the federal government repair it to their satisfaction.

Maryland's Governor James Thomas insisted that the road be completely rebuilt using the new macadam method developed by the Scottish engineer, John L. McAdam. This process, rather than using larger stones for a base, called for the use of small stones throughout, so thoroughly compacted that they formed practically a solid base.

By 1837, when the young engineers of the War Department had macadamized the road to Wheeling and beyond, the road was said to have reached its peak of perfection. The old roadway had been paved to a width of 20 feet; the new surfacing was 30 feet wide.

Maryland had taken over the administration of the road in 1835, operating it as a toll facility. It set up two toll houses, one just west of Cumberland (the brick octagonal building is still standing), and the other west of Frostburg (the building is gone, but the toll gate posts remain).

The road was filled with gaily painted stages, canvas-covered Conestoga wagons, and droves of animals. Inns were placed about 12 miles apart for the stages, and wagon stands or taverns dotted the roadside every mile or so.

The Old National Road was not just colorful and picturesque; it opened the West years ahead of the railroad and had a profound impact on the economy of early Maryland and the growth of the Port of Baltimore.



*Rebuilding the National Road in 1834. Workmen sit on the ground breaking stone with a small hammer. The inspector at left is testing the stone to see if it will pass through a 3-inch ring. The one next to him is weighing each stone to keep it down to 4 ounces.*

## Casselman Bridge was built to last

No stream crossing was a finer example of hand-built sturdiness than the stone-arch bridges of the early Nineteenth Century; and no state had more conspicuous examples of this ancient art than Maryland.

The Casselman (also spelled Castleman) River Bridge, near Grantsville in Garrett County, was the largest stone arch bridge in America when it was built in 1813 as part of the National Road.

Each stone in the 80-foot, single-arch bridge was hand-cut and hand-placed. The huge arch of the bridge was so unusual at the time it was built that many citizens shook their heads and predicted it would fall as soon as the supports were removed.

This apprehension was so general that the contractor's confidence in his own work was undermined. To avoid embarrassment on the day of the formal opening, he slipped out the night before and removed the arch support timbers. The bridge stood, "as though created from solid stone."



*Casselman River Bridge*

The Casselman Bridge was in continuous use for 120 years. It was closed in 1933, when a new concrete and steel structure was erected by the State Roads Commission to give better alignment and a wider roadway.

The majestic old bridge, now a National Historic Landmark, is still standing in an excellent state of preservation.



# I-68 CONSTRUCTION SPANNED 26 YEARS

## ► BUILDING, from page 1

Where U.S. 40 veered northwest at Keyser's Ridge to head up through Pennsylvania to Wheeling, West Virginia, the new National Freeway would instead blaze a new trail due west, to connect with Interstate 79 at Morgantown, West Virginia.

The construction of the freeway, originally designated U.S. 48, spanned 26 years, alternately proceeding full speed ahead through times of fiscal plenty and stagnating in times of fiscal drought, and occasionally becoming mired in controversy over environmental impacts and alternate routes.

But in the end, a modern, divided, multi-lane, controlled access freeway built to exacting interstate standards and designated I-68 would stretch for 82 unbroken miles through the most rugged mountain terrain in the state.

By November, 1966, two segments of the freeway were already completed: a 3-mile section in Washington County, just west of Hancock, and a one-mile section of the Cumberland Thruway, just east of Cumberland. In December, 1967, a 3.6-mile section opened east of Green Ridge State Forest in Allegany County, from Mountain Road to Orleans Road.

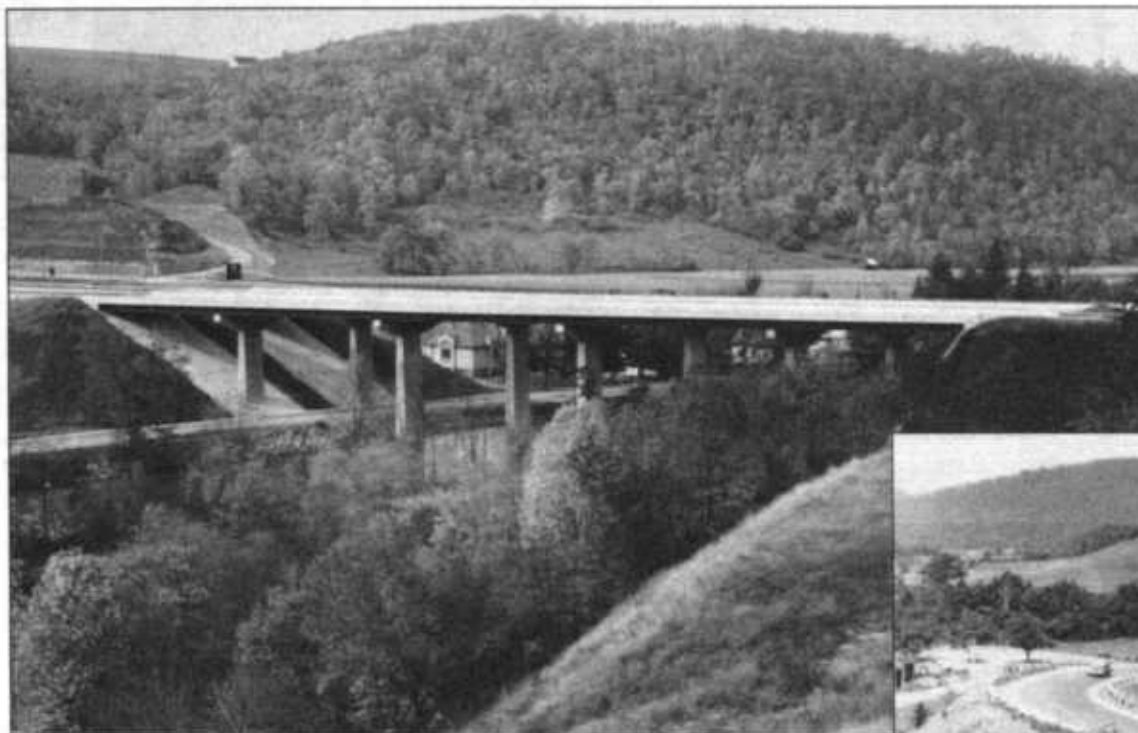
A 3.6-mile section running west out of Cumberland to Volke Road (MD 53) opened on October 18, 1969.

During the next decade construction on the freeway pushed steadily westward from Cumberland to the West Virginia state line, with these milestones:

□ October 12, 1973 — Opened from LaVale to MD 36 at Frostburg.

□ November 1, 1974 — Opened from MD 36 to the Finzel Road interchange (2 miles into Garrett County).

□ November 13, 1975 — 14-mile segment opened from Keyser's Ridge to the West Virginia border. At the same time, West Virginia dedicated 27 miles of its portion of



### Old and new

The sleek lines of the new National Freeway offer a striking contrast to the sharp curves of old U.S. 40: left, the freeway crossing the Youghiogheny River in Garrett County; below, U.S. 40 at the west foot of Polish Mountain, about 1937.



Courtesy Al Feldstein, MD Planning Office

the highway running into Morgantown.

□ August 13, 1976 — 13-mile segment opened from Finzel Road to the Keyser's Ridge interchange.

With the opening of this last segment, the 44-mile portion of the freeway from Cumberland to the West Virginia line, a \$126 million undertaking, was completed.

In the meantime, plans were underway for the Cumberland-to-Hancock segment.

With the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act in 1970, Maryland was now required to file an Environmental Impact Statement before beginning any major road construction.

A Location Study was begun in 1972, alternate routes selected, and public hearings were held in 1973.

This last portion was divided into two sections. An alternate route was approved in 1977 by the Federal Highway Administration for Section II, the Sideling Hill section, from Town Hill to Hancock. The 4.5-mile Sideling Hill Cut segment of Section II opened on August 15, 1985. The entire 8.7-mile Sideling Hill section was completed in 1986, at a cost of \$44 million.

But selecting the best alternate for Section I, the remaining 19-mile segment, was a much more difficult task.

At stake were the potential impacts of various alternates on historic areas, including the Breakneck Valley and Flintstone historic districts; and on Green Ridge State Forest and Rocky Gap State Park.

The alternate selected and approved by FHWA in 1980, AGBF2, was an entirely new route considerably south of U.S. 40. It was opposed by environmental groups, who favored simply upgrading U.S. 40. The groups took the issue to court, which ruled in favor of the State Highway Administration.

In 1984, however, SHA completely re-evaluated the alignments.

"We did a tremendous amount of coordination with the Department of Natural Resources on the selected alignment," said Robert Houst, assistant division chief, Project Planning, who became the project manager in 1985.

Based on cost and impacts to parkland and the natural environment, they selected Modified



**The National Freeway, stretching over 82 miles of rugged mountain terrain, is built to exacting interstate standards.**

AGEA, an alignment that generally follows U.S. 40 from Green Ridge State Forest to Wolfe Mill. The project was approved by FHWA in 1986.

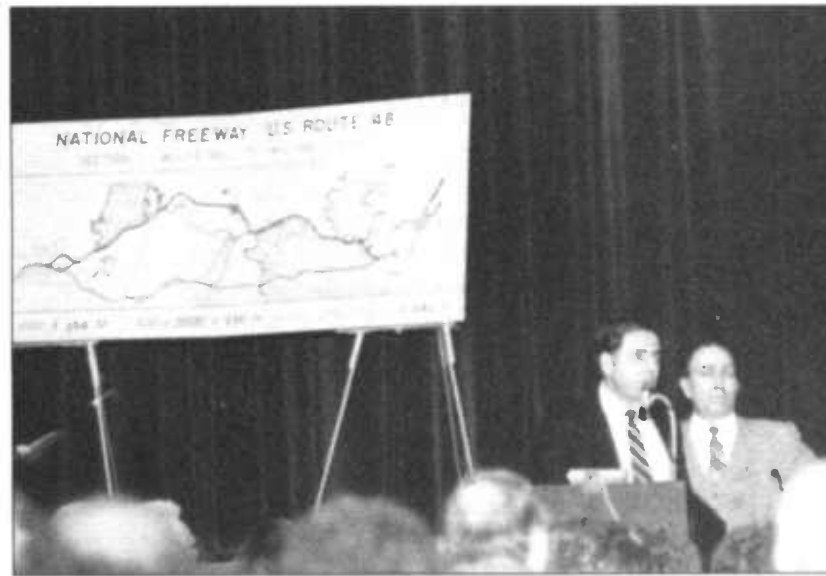
"[Then-] Transportation Secretary Bill Hellmann and Administrator Hal Kassoff took a personal interest in this job," said Houst. "It was a top priority with Governor Schaefer."

SWHAT — the Statewide Highway Action Team, led by then-Project Engineer Bob Douglass (now Deputy Chief Engineer, Highway Development), fast-tracked the project through planning and design.

Ground was broken for the \$182 million project on May 25, 1987. Opening ceremonies for the final segment and for the designation of the National Freeway as Interstate 68 are scheduled for August 2.



Lt. Gov. Blair Lee III (2nd from left) and Transportation Secretary Harry Hughes (left) open the U.S. 48 segment from Keyser's Ridge to the West Virginia state line in 1975; photo right: Administrator Hal Kassoff and District Engineer Wallace Beaulieu speak at an early public meeting on the final segment of U.S. 48.



# THE LAST 19 MILES

Completing the last gap of the National Freeway was a high priority, fast-track project in which planning, design, and right of way acquisition, normally done in sequence, were done simultaneously, followed hard on the heels by construction.

It was a scenario calling for tremendous coordination and cooperation between everyone involved.

For this formidable task, the State Highway Administration assembled an impressive cast of planning and design consultants and contractors.

In late 1984 the consultant firms of Wilson T. Ballard Company, of Owings Mills, and Rummel, Klepper and Kahl, of Baltimore, were retained to complete engineering and environmental studies to identify possible alignment modifications that would mitigate adverse impacts.

After a September, 1985, Location/Design Public Hearing and a subsequent

Photo by John Thrasher



Construction proceeds on the National Freeway crossing Towne Creek at Flintstone in the fall of 1990. Vecellio and Grogan were the contractors.

extensive evaluation process, SHA selected the U.S. 40 corridor alignment.

The project was completed under five contracts. The design consultants, all local firms, for these contracts (listed geographically, from east to west) were:

Contract 1 (M.V. Smith Road to Davis Road) and Contract 2 (Davis Road to Old Cumberland Road) — Hurst-Rosche Engineers.

Contract 3 (Old Cumberland Road to Dolly Road) — Rummel, Klepper and Kahl.

Contract 4 (Dolly Road to Hinkle Road) — Greiner, Inc.

Contract 5 (Hinkle Road to Christie Road) — Johnson, Mirmiran and Thompson/Kennedy Porter and Associates Joint Venture.

"Contract 1 was common to all the alignments, so we started the design on it real early — so construction on it started early, a year before the other contracts," said Bob Douglass, Deputy Chief Engineer, Highway Development. "Once the [alignment] decision was made, the other jobs followed, and the design work was done on all of them simultaneously."

The consultants designed the bridges within their respective highway segments, working from a design theme supplied by SHA's bridge design engineers.

"The typical bridge had stone facing on the abutments, to help blend with the environment," said bridge design engineer Ralph Manna. "The piers had an unusual V-shape, for aesthetics. The posts on the fencing and the fronts of the abutments were also slanted, to match the piers."

The prime contractors were:

S. J. Grove, of Minneapolis, Minn. — Contract 1.

Geupel Construction, of Columbus, Ohio — Contracts 2 and 5.

Vecellio and Grogan, of Beckley, W.Va. — Contract 3.

Trumbull Corporation, of Pittsburgh, Pa. — Contract 4.

"We had good bids," noted Douglass. They came in generally below the engineers' estimates."

The project included 20 bridges, six box culverts, 15 multi-plate pipes (for storm drainage), and 12 retaining walls.

"A lot of money on this job was spent on moving dirt" because of the mountainous terrain, said Douglass.

The project required moving 13.9 million cubic yards of excavation. The sidehill fill on Martin's Mountain, performed by Trumbull Corporation, was an unusual challenge, calling for 2 1/2 million yards of a special fill made out of rock.

"It's unusual to have that much fill in one area," said Jim Zufall, ADE Construction, District 6.

The entire job required 2.75 miles of stream relocation, which was monitored closely by the Water Resources Administration.

For the most part, the contracts proceeded very smoothly and were completed on time, said Zufall. "We were able to maintain traffic at all times."

"The end result was very good," he concluded.

## EXHIBIT CENTER TO HAVE GEOLOGIC INFO



The Sideling Hill Exhibit Center promises to make the Sideling Hill Cut a major tourist attraction.

Geologists were ecstatic when the Sideling Hill Cut was completed.

They called it one of the best rock exposures in the entire country, comparable to the famous premier road cut along Interstate 70 west of Denver.

The Sideling Hill Cut reveals richly colored layers of sandstones, siltstones, shale, coal and conglomerates in red, maroon, gray, tan, black and white.

It offers a spectacular view of a syncline, a downfold of layered rock, formed when layers of rocks were tilted and folded by the collision between the North American and African continents about 230 million years ago.

Marine fossils found in the oldest

of the cut's exposed layers, which predate the dinosaur, show that seas once covered Western Maryland.

"It's the guiding exposure for sedimentary geology in the Northeast," declared one geologist, who has studied the cut for several years.

But soon, the Sideling Hill Cut won't be just for geologists anymore.

With the opening of the Sideling Hill Exhibit Center on August 2, motorists will be able to do more than catch a quick glimpse of the cut as they ride by.

The facility will feature a three-story exhibit and tourist information center on westbound I-68. Visitors will be able to get a



The Sideling Hill Exhibit Center, under construction, will open August 2.

closer view of the cut from a viewing area, also on the westbound side. A pedestrian bridge above I-68 will connect the westbound side with additional parking on the eastbound side.

The third floor of the center will offer a potpourri of geological exhibits, many of them hands-on, showing the various rocks at the cut, the types of tools used by geologists, geological environments, and a geological map of Maryland. An animated movie will illustrate how Sideling Hill, and the Appalachian Mountains, of which it is a part, were formed.

A button-activated video and exhibits on the mezzanine floor will show how engineers made the cut.

The second floor will feature

tourist information and displays of tourist attractions throughout Maryland. The first, or basement floor will have a 65-seat auditorium and can be used as a lab and a reception hall to accommodate visiting groups of schoolchildren and others.

The center, built and operated through the joint efforts of the State Highway Administration, the Department of Economic and Employment Development and the Department of Natural Resources, will include picnic areas, restrooms and vending facilities.

The new Sideling Hill Exhibit Center promises to be the catalyst that will make the Sideling Hill Cut one of the major tourist attractions in Maryland.

## Vietnam Veterans memorial at site

Interstate 68 is dedicated in recognition and memory of those Marylanders who served in the Vietnam War — 1959–1975.

That is the inscription of a plaque that will appear on Western Maryland's first Vietnam veterans' memorial, to be located at the Sideling Hill Exhibit Center site.

The memorial will be dedicated on August 2, the date for the opening of the center and for ceremonies designating U.S. 48 as Interstate 68, which will

be dedicated to the Vietnam veterans of Maryland.

The memorial was proposed by the Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 172, of Cumberland. The plaque, provided by the veterans' chapter, will be placed on an 11-ton, gray sandstone conglomerate rock from Savage River State Park.

The State Highway Administration is designing and landscaping the memorial site.



# MAINTAINING I-68 IS MAJOR OPERATION



Snow removal on I-68 will be an important maintenance operation.

Building an 82-mile interstate is no small job.

Neither is maintaining it once it's completed.

The annual price tag for maintaining the National Freeway will be approximately \$2.2 million.

If that sounds high, consider what has to be done to keep this new interstate in good condition:

❑ Periodic resurfacing and sealing of the four-lane highway's approximately 400 lane miles of bituminous asphalt pavement

❑ Snow removal and winter operations cleanup

❑ Maintaining signs, traffic signals, line striping, guard rails and lighting

❑ Bridge repair, painting and cleaning

❑ Cleaning ditches and drains

❑ Litter control

❑ Emergency maintenance due to storms or flooding

❑ Grass mowing

❑ Courtesy patrols at civic events and on holiday weekends

❑ Responding to emergency conditions such as accidents and spills.

Maintenance should be minimal on the newer portions of I-68 for the first year or two.

"There won't be any need for patching, joint sealing or line striping at least this year," says Maple Golden, the assistant district engineer in charge of the freeway's upkeep.

But as the roadway ages, motorists will see State Highway Administration maintenance workers out along the highway, mowing the grass with tractor mowers, string trimmers, and "boom-axes" — tractors with large arms that extend out to mow behind guard rails or up slopes.

Signal technicians, hoisted up in aerial bucket trucks, will repair traffic signals.

District paint crews, operating specially designed paint trucks, will restripe lines. Each paint truck will be followed by a vehicle with



Photo by Jim Blubaugh



Photo by Karl Schulte

Top photo: A front end loader removes snow from the ramp from U.S. 219 to the National Freeway; bottom photo, surface patching on the Crosstown Bridge segment of the freeway in Cumberland are (from left) Ken Rosenberger, Ernie Santmyre, Ken Hill and Joe Clanagan.



Photo by Karl Schulte

Highway worker Terry Frazee tightens a new guardrail section on the National Freeway.

a large arrow board to divert traffic, and by a dump truck with an attachment called an attenuator, which acts as a crash cushion in case a motorist fails to heed the arrow board.

Workers will seal pavement cracks with a Bearcat sealer, a small boiler with a hose that squeezes liquid rubber into the cracks. Crews will resurface pavement using trucks, sweepers, pavers and 6-ton rollers.

The magnitude of I-68's snow

removal operations, however, is what will make its maintenance chores unique from those of all other Maryland interstates.

The winter season in the three counties spanned by I-68 is longer and colder than anywhere else in Maryland. In Garrett County, the westernmost county, it extends from October through April, with over 30 storms and 100-plus inches of snow annually.

Combine this with the mountainous terrain, where trucks attempting to snake up long, 6 percent grades in the snow often get stuck, blocking one or two lanes and obstructing snow removal vehicles, and you've got a major maintenance challenge.

The good news is that there should not be major drifting on I-68, because most of the roadway is built high, allowing the snow to drift down and away from it.

In addition, because the freeway is an interstate and therefore a primary artery, clearing it during snowstorms will receive top priority. Workers will use a wide variety of equipment: snow plows with spreaders for salt and abrasives; large, four-wheel drive trucks with big blades; front end loaders to remove snow from shoulders and gore areas; and seven snow blowers of various sizes.

In short, the State Highway Administration's plans to maintain the National Freeway promise to perpetuate Maryland's reputation for excellence in highway maintenance.

## Signs of the times

The simple road markers along the Old National Road offer a sharp contrast to the modern signs that will direct traffic on the new National Freeway.

Most of the original National Road markers, which date back as early as 1806, were of cast iron, painted white. Shaped like miniature Washington Monuments, they dotted the roadside at 1-mile intervals.

Some did double duty with, for example, one side reading "1 [mile] to Cumberland" for eastbound travelers, and another side, directing westbound travelers, reading "130 to Wheeling; to Frostburgh, 10."

Only about seven or eight of these picturesque markers remain along Old U.S. 40 west of Cumberland in Maryland.

It is intriguing to imagine a caped stagecoach driver climbing down from his perch during a nighttime run, lantern held aloft, to peer through the darkness at one of

these markers, which were only 1 1/2 to 3 feet high, hard to read and set well off the road.

A very different experience awaits the traveler along the new National Freeway. Over 1,000 brightly colored signs, constructed of reflective aluminum sheeting for easy visibility at night, will direct the traveler.

They will include 395 of the distinctive red, white and blue interstate route shields; ground-mounted destination, or mileage, panels 13 feet across and 8 feet high; 12-by-15 foot overhead exit signs; 164 milepost markers, and, of course, speed limit signs.

All of them will follow uniform standards set by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, designed to enable quick comprehension by motorists who have only a few seconds to read their message.



Photo by Karl Schulte

The original marker, above, on the south bank of Wills Creek, marks the beginning of the Old National Road west.

# I-68 is freeway to fun in Western Maryland



The National Freeway will make visiting Western Maryland's many attractions easier and more enjoyable than ever.

With the completion of the National Freeway, Western Maryland will be easier than ever to get to, and so will its many attractions.

For natural beauty, Western Maryland is hard to beat. The grand, forested peaks and valleys of the Appalachian Mountains form a rugged and breathtaking wonderland.

For outdoor enthusiasts, its 75,000 acres of forests, lakes and rivers offer camping, canoeing, hiking, fishing, rafting and skiing. History buffs will find many places worth visiting too.

Here are just a few of many attractions to put on your "Don't Miss" list:

## PLACES TO GO

### GARRETT COUNTY

(For more information call 301-334-1948)

**DEEP CREEK LAKE**, US 219, McHenry — Largest freshwater lake in Maryland. Boating, water skiing, fishing, swimming, hiking, sailing, skiing, snow mobiling, ice skating, camping.



Canoeing on Deep Creek Lake.

**SAVAGE RIVER**, northwest of Bloomington — named for harrowing whitewater along a 5 1/2-mile run; site of 1989 World Championship Whitewater Races.

**YOUGHIOGHENY RIVER AND RESERVOIR**, off National Freeway, Friendsville — River flows through Garrett County in an almost completely unspoiled state; fishing, boating, water-skiing, swimming and camping.

### ALLEGANY COUNTY

(For more information call 301-777-5905)

**ALLEGANY CENTRAL RAILROAD**, Western Maryland Station Center, Cumberland — Steam-powered train ride from Cumberland through beautiful mountain scenery to Frostburg and back.

**C&O CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK VISITOR CENTER**, Cumberland — Features a display of canal photos and artifacts.

**THE NARROWS**, US 40A west of Cumberland — Famous scenic passageway through the mountains through which Americans traveled to settle the West.



A kayaker fights the rapids on Savage River.

### WASHINGTON COUNTY

(For more information call 301-791-3130)

**ANTIETAM NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD**, MD 65, Sharpsburg — Civil War site of the bloodiest single day battle in American history.

**C&O CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK** — 184.5-mile towpath paralleling Potomac River from Georgetown to Cumberland.

**FORT FREDERICK**, Fort Frederick State Park, MD 56, Big Pool — Last remaining British stone fort in America; used during French and Indian Wars, Revolutionary and Civil Wars.

## THINGS TO DO

### AUGUST 2-4 — Rocky Gap Music Festival

Rocky Gap State Park, Fri., 7-10 p.m.; Sat.-Sun. 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Country/Western, Bluegrass, arts and crafts, food, children's entertainment, picnicking, camping, swimming, canoeing.

### AUGUST 3 — Hagerstown City Market 200-Year Anniversary

Market House, Sat., 6 a.m.-1 p.m. Fresh produce, meats, crafts, entertainment, door prizes.

Antietam National Battlefield.



### AUGUST 3-4 — Jonathan Hager Frontier Craft Days

Jonathan Hager House, Sat.-Sun., 1 a.m.-5 p.m. Demonstrating craftsmen, Bluegrass music, food.

### AUGUST 11-17 — Garrett County Agriculture Fair

Garrett County Fairgrounds, US 219. Exhibits, 4-H, FFA, crafts, displays, livestock, entertainment, parade, large midway, baby beef sale.

### AUGUST 17-18 — Maryland State Chili Championship

Allegany County Fairgrounds. Crowning of Miss Chili Pepper, chili cookers compete for prizes and trophy, samples, entertainment, food.

### AUGUST 31 — Greater Gortner Airport Fly-in

Off Blue Ribbon Road. 7th annual event for all ages; candy drop for children, skydiving, airshow, aerobatic flying, live band, Shriner clowns, airplane rides, concessions, remote control airplanes, displays and exhibits.

### OCTOBER 10-13 — Autumn Glory Festival

Deep Creek Lake, Garrett County. Celebrates beautiful fall foliage; parade, Maryland five-string banjo and fiddle championship, antiques, dancing.